Installation view (main room), *The Machine that Grew too Big...* at Norske Hus, Sophienholm, 2026.

Echo, Wax, clothing, furniture, zink piping, audio, 2026.

Factory Interior, Collage and Gouache on Paper, 2025.

Echo (detail)*,* Wax, clothing, furniture, zink piping, audio, 2026.

Boiler Room, Collage and Gouache on Paper, 2026.

Detail of piping in main room, leading into left-hand room.

Installation view, left-hand room.

Factory Exterior, Collage, Gouache on Paper, and Pen & Ink on Paper, 2026.

Installation view, main room (looking towards right hand room).

Garden I, Collage, Gouache, and Pen & Ink on Paper, 2026.

Garden II, Collage, Gouache, and Pen & Ink on Paper, 2026..

The Singing Gardener (detail), Wax, clothing, birdhouse, toy bird, audio, 2026.

Installation outside in park area nearby main exhibition space.

Maskinen, der voksede sig for stor, og den syngende gartner

22. august - 26. september 2026
Norske Hus, Sophienholm

Af Sam Derounian,
kurateret af Christopher Sand-Iversen

Udstillingen *Maskinen, der voksede sig for stor, og den syngende gartner* af kunstneren Sam Derounian i Norske Hus på Sophineholm omfatter to installationer – én indendørs i Norske Hus i parken omkring Sophienholm og én udendørs tæt på huset. Installationen i Norske Hus udfolder et fortælling om en gruppe børn, der er fanget i rørsystemet i en uhyggelig fabrik – et fangenskab, der dræner deres livsglæde. I fortællingen bryder børnene ud vender tilbage til det fri. En figur, der ses udenfor, frembyder en spekulativ vision af vores fremtid, hvor menneskeheden, natur og teknologi sameksisterer i en fængslende alternativ sammensætning.

Denne fortælling udtrykker Sam Derounians politiske og sociale kritik af kommunikationsteknologi gennem visuel symbolik og poetisk allegori, særligt ved at anvende »rørsystemet« som en metafor for udnyttelsen af menneskelige »ressourcer« f.eks. gennem dataindsamling. Udstillingen belyser det problem, at den stigende brug af digitale teknologier som AI-chatbots og sociale medier påviseligt hænger sammen med forværret mental sundhed blandt unge, samtidig med at disse platforme i stigende grad forbliver uregulerede.

Denne strukturelle fejl i et af nutidens mest vitale og udbredte fænomener, kommunikationsteknologien, er udgangspunktet for denne udstilling, sammen med Derounians personlige kontekst, at han for nylig er blevet far og er i stigende grad bekymret over de forhold hans søn kommer til at vokse op under. Udstillingens formidling af emnet gennem visuel og narrativ symbolik, der er både immersiv og visuelt slående, gør, at den appellerer til et bredt publikum.

En publikation er under udarbejdelse, som indeholder risografier af kunstnerens collagemalerier, der optræder i udstillingen. Publikationen udkommer i begrænset oplag hos RSS Press, og værkerne forsynes med kunstkritiske tekster af kuratorer og skribenter Lars Bang Larsen og Carola Uehlken (DE).

The Machine that Grew Too Big and the Singing Gardener

22 August - 26 September 2026
Norske Hus, Sophienholm

By Sam Derounian,
curated by Christopher Sand-Iversen

The exhibition *The Machine that Grew Too Big and the Singing Gardener* by artist Sam Derounian in the Norske Hus at Sophienholm comprises two installations – one indoor space in Norske Hus in the park surrounding Sophienholm, and one outdoor installation nearby. The installation in Norske Hus unfolds a narrative in which a group of children are trapped in the piping system of a factory, which is draining their life force. In the narrative, the children break out and return to nature. A figure outside presents a speculative vision of our future, in which humanity, nature and technology coexist in a compelling alternative constellation.

The narrative expresses Sam Derounian's political and social critique of communication technologies through visual symbolism and poetic allegory, particularly by employing the motif of the 'piping system' as a metaphor for the exploitation of human 'resources', for example through data collection. The exhibition sheds light on the issue that the increasing use of digital technologies such as AI chatbots and social media demonstrably correlates with deteriorating mental health among young people, whilst these platforms remain increasingly unregulated.

This structural failure in one of the most vital and prevalent phenomena in today's world, communications technology, is the departure point of this exhibition, alongside Derounian's personal context of recently having become a father and being increasingly concerned with the conditions his son will grow up in. The exhibition's presentation of the subject matter through visual and narrative symbolism, which is both immersive and visually striking, ensures it appeals to a broad audience.

A publication is currently being produced containing riso prints of the artist's collage-paintings, which appear in the exhibition. The publication will be released in a limited edition by RSS Press, and the works will be accompanied by art-critical texts by curators and writers Lars Bang Larsen and Carola Uehlken (DE).

Acknowledgements / Tak

Sam Derounian would like to acknowledge:

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To all the foundations whose financial support made this exhibition possible – Statens Kunstfond, Lyngby-Taarbæk Kommune, Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond, Knud Højgaards Fond, and Dansk Tennis Fond.

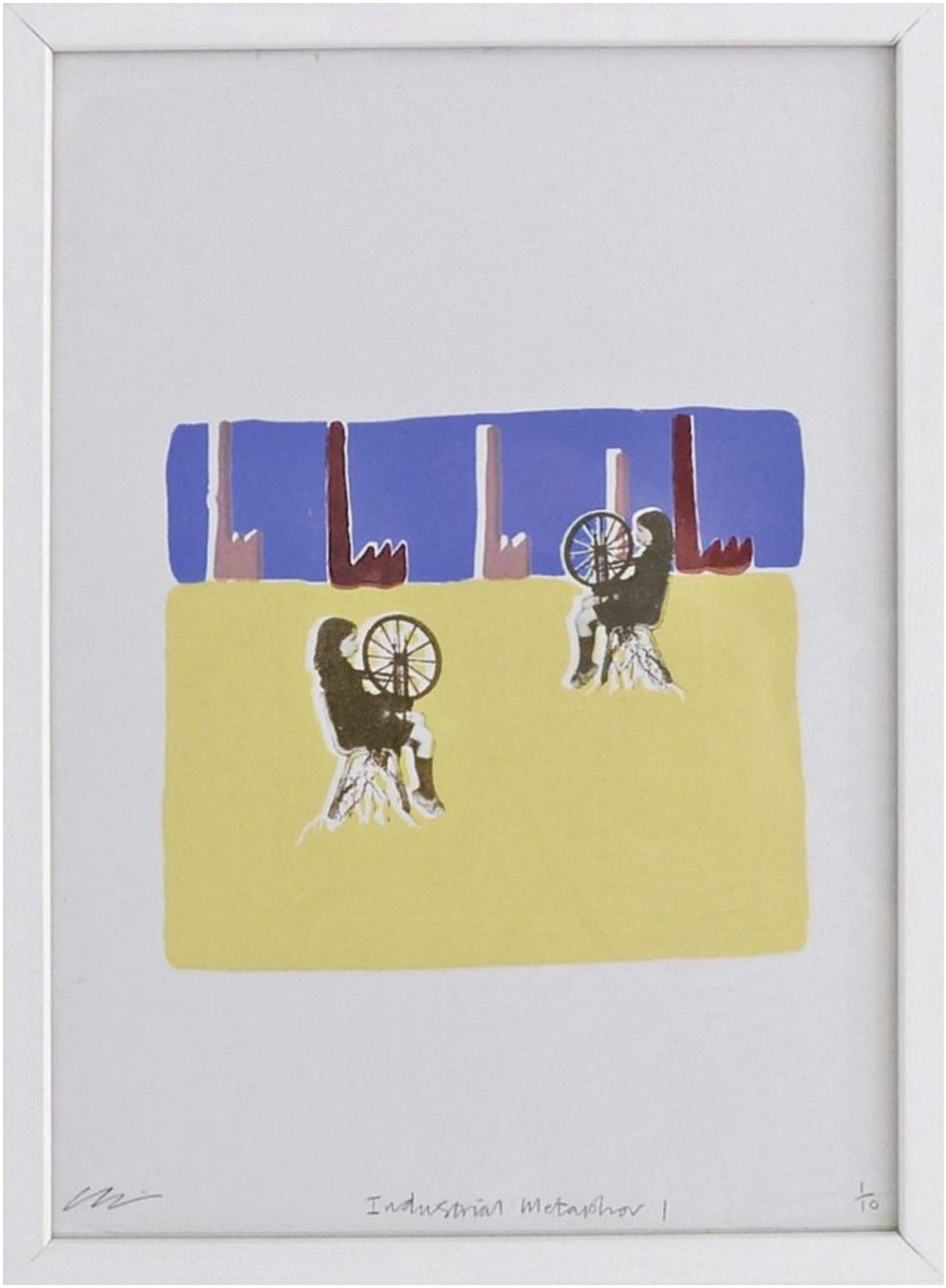
Sam Derounian og SixtyEight ønsker at takke de ansatte på Sophienholm som åbnede Norske Hus for udstillingen og medvirkede til projektets realisering, ligesom vi takker tidligere medarbejder Frederik Rørmann Saxton.

Stor tak rettes til de fonde der generøst har støttet udstillingen, Statens Kunstfond, Lyngby-Taarbæk Kommune, Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond, Knud Højgaards Fond, Dansk Tennis Fond, såvel som de fonde, Ny Carlsbergfondet, Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond, Dansk Tennis Fond, der har støttet den ledsagende publikation, udgivet af RSS Press.

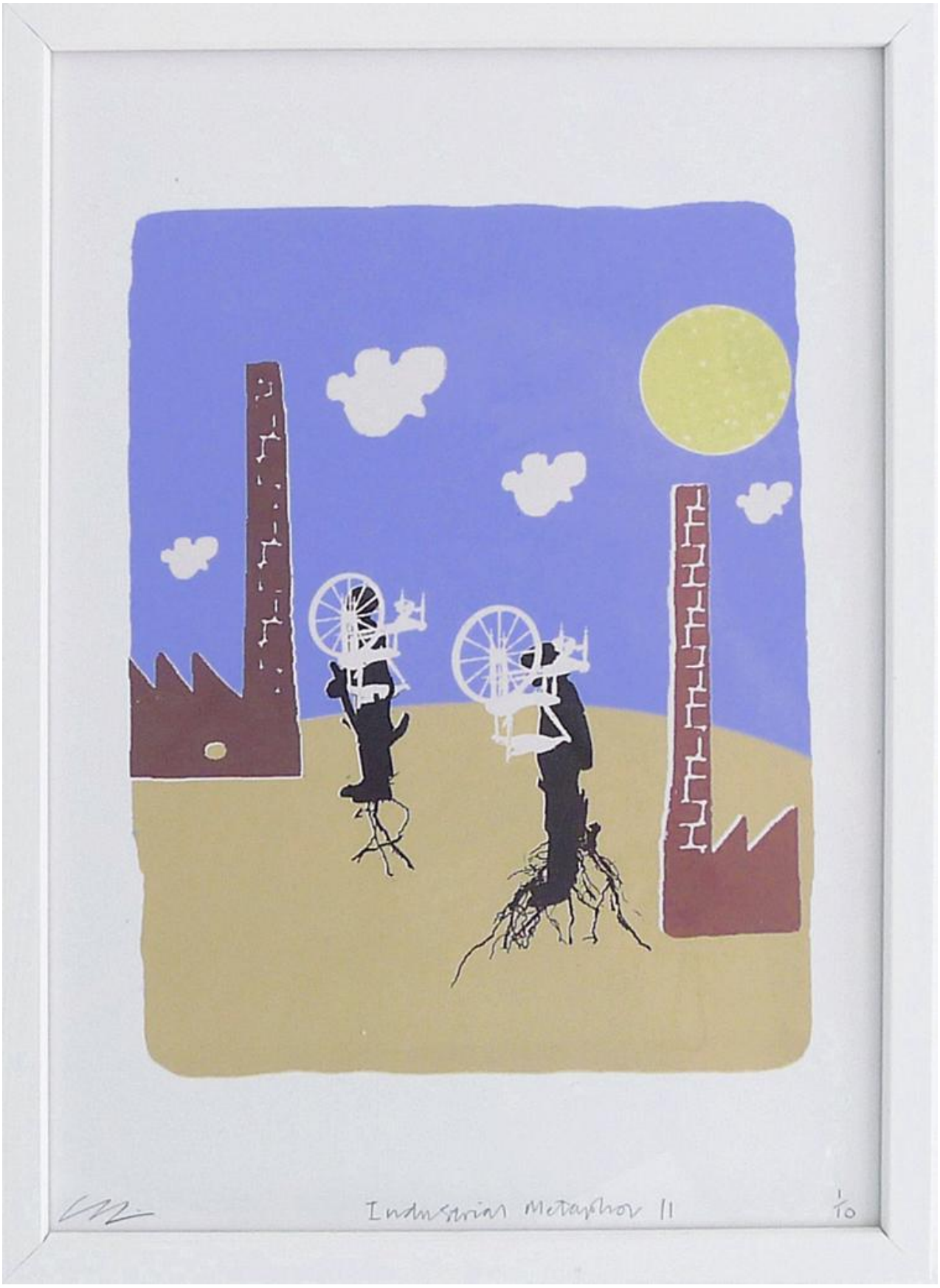
Sketches for Silouette Sculptures, Colour Screenprint on Paper, 2023.
From Solo Exhibition *Industrial and Horticultural Metaphors* at Danske Grafikeres Hus.

Industrial and Horticultural Metaphors Poem, Inkjet Print on Somerset Paper, 2023.

Installation view ground floor, Danske Grafikeres Hus, 2023.



Industrial Metaphor I, Screenprint on Paper, 2023.



Industrial Metaphor II, Screenprint on Paper, 2023.

Installation view Ground Floor, Danske Grafikeres Hus.

Sam Derounian - Industrial and Horticultural Metaphors - solo exhibition at Danske Grafikeres Hus, 2023 (exhibition text):

For his solo exhibition at Danske Grafikeres Hus the artist will show screen-prints combining natural and industrial imagery entangled with the human figure and set within hand-painted environments.

The exhibition deals with themes of humans' relationship with technology and its effects on wellbeing and self-perception, taking its name from a lecture by the British educational philosopher Ken Robinson. Robinson compared educational models of the contemporary west to those of industry, opining that they should more ideally resemble those of horticulture, if students were to thrive and develop.

Derounian applies Robinson's ideas about development and wellbeing in the context of his new body of work for the exhibition; His allegorical images explore the atomizing and isolating effects of the ubiquity of technology and the negation of nature on the individual – psychologically, socially, politically, and philosophically – in the series, shown in its complete form for the first time.

The exhibition is supported by:

Københavns Kommune Rådet for Visuel Kunst.

Statens Værksteder for Kunst.

Nesting, Watering, and *Picturing* installation view from solo exhibition at SET, London, 2019.

Three spotlights illuminated the three sculptures in turn as a voiceover written for each of the sculpture was played on a hidden speaker in the gallery.

Nesting, bird house, boiler suit, display stand, coat hanger, roots of a plant, wall painting, 2019.

Video documentation

Nesting (details).

Nesting

N – Costume for Nesting (Lloyd Durling)

N: Part 1: Nesting.

LIGHTS ON

[Lights come on]

I hear a sound. Cheep, chirp; cheep, chirp; going up and down. Birds are singing up and down all round us.

[Slide whistle sound effect]

N: The birds sang in chorus first, now they fly off. Off they fly like a fling of seed.

[Singing] Oh I am a lonely painter, I live in a box of paints...

Now they have all gone. I am alone and I am left standing by the wall among the flowers. I hold a stalk in my hand. I am the stalk.

Watering, modified watering can, boiler suit, display stand, coat hanger, rake, gardening gloves, wall painting, 2019.

Video documentation

Watering (details).

Watering

W – Costume and Mask for Watering (Dominic Dispirito)

W: Interlude.

[The actor changes out of the mask and costume for **nesting**.]

...Yet I am not single and entire, I have several lives... Every day I unbury – I dig up. I find relics of myself in the sand...

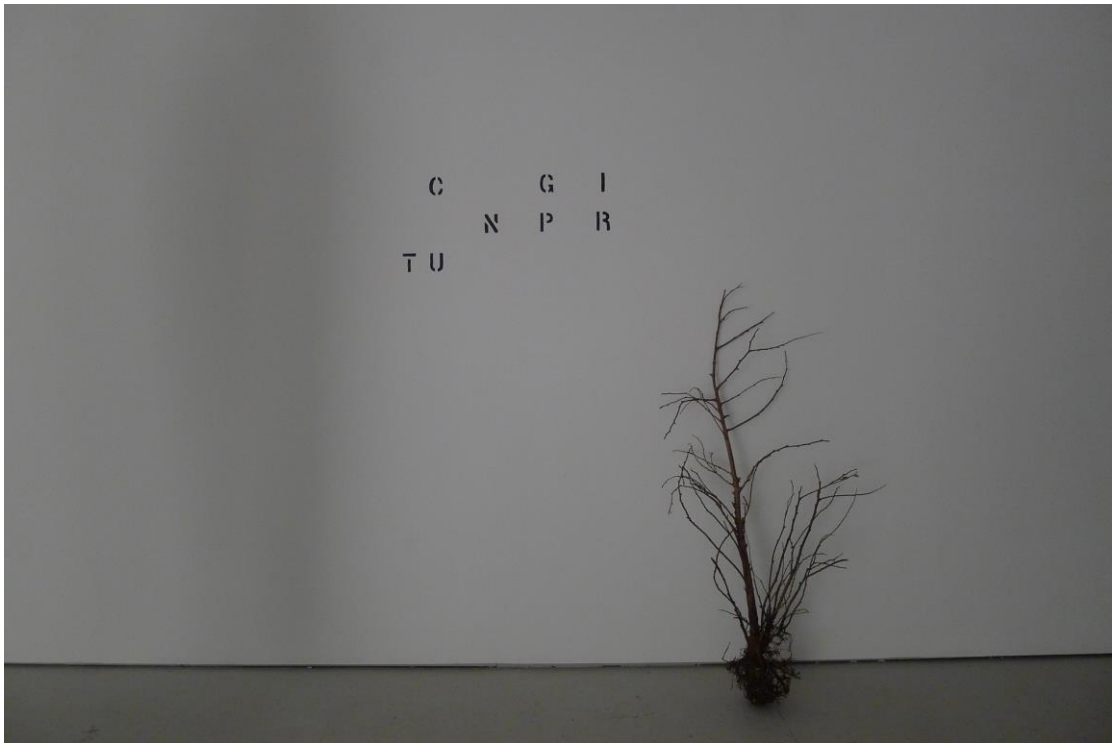
Sometimes I do not know who I am, or how to measure and count out the grains that make me *what* I am...

[Changes into the costume and mask for Watering]

Script for *Watering*, page 1.

Picturing, leatherette pinhole camera, boiler suit, display stand, coat hanger, petrified sapling, wall painting.

Video documentation



P*icturing* (details).

Birds are singing up and down all around me.

[Slide whistle sound effect]

They sang in chorus first, now they fly off. Off they fly like a fling of seed.

I am alone again, standing by another wall at the edge of the garden.

I am wearing grey cotton overalls. Let me be seen. Let what I am and what I have achieved be seen.

My head is clad with leatherette, with silver knobs and catches on its topside. My eye, like the others, a lidless, lashless perfect circle – pure negative space, and through it - like a gunsight – I stare, wide-eyed. Back and forth I move the site, **picturing** fragments of the garden as I turn my head from side to side.

Behind it my eyelid - an automatic shutter – is readied. With the compression and release of a single button it moves almost imperceptibly open and shut behind my eye, capturing images of the garden; Of what I see, of what I want to see.

Page 2 of the script for *Picturing*.

Sam Derounian, *Nesting, Watering, Picturing at SET,* London, 2019.
Exhibition text:

The exhibition explores the concept of ‘work’ in an expanded sense of the word, and how the concept structures much of contemporary experience and identity.

The exhibition installation consists of a theatrical environment inhabited by three costumed and masked ‘characters’ – each representing a different kind of work; Nesting (whose mask is a bird box) represents ‘emotional labour’, Watering (whose mask is a watering can) represents vocational labour, and Picturing (whose mask is an enlarged pinhole camera) embodies the labour involved in cultivating self-image.

A short script has been written for each of the three sculpture ‘characters’, exploring the psychological and emotional effects of undertaking the different kind of work each character embodies. A recording of the scripts spoken aloud plays over a hidden speaker in the exhibition space, which is synchronised with three spotlights that illuminate each of the sculptures in turn as their part of the script is read aloud. This repeats as a constant cycle in the exhibition space.

In addition to the above, several props-like found objects - including a dead tree, a rake, and the roots of dead plants and wall painted elements (which feature in the exhibition’s script) also form part of the exhibition installation.